

CONGRESSMAN MIKE HONDA

**BOOZMAN AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3
FLOOR STATEMENT**

MARCH 9, 2005

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Boozman Amendment to H.R. 3, The Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, that will extend the workday for truck drivers from 14 to 16 hours—almost double the workday of an average American. The Boozman will further endanger lives of everyone on the road and that is why highway safety groups and labor organizations have denounced this effort.

The Boozman Amendment purports to increase the productivity of the trucking industry while simultaneously offering drivers additional opportunities during their shifts to rest. But in reality, it will do just the opposite. In fact, it will do just the opposite by undercutting efforts to put drivers on a 24-hour circadian clock and encouraging businesses to squeeze even more hours out of interstate truck drivers.

Just yesterday, I participated in a press conference with two families who spoke movingly about the loss of their children in truck-related accidents. Rick and Ann Curl of Overland Park, Kansas lost their 15-year old daughter, Ashley Curl, whose life was taken by a tired trucker while returning from a horse show in Louisville, Kentucky.

And Daphne Izer of Lisbon, Maine gave emotional testimony about the death of her son, Jeffery Izer, who was killed with three of his friends by a trucker that fell asleep at the wheel. Ms. Izer's loss led her to found Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.), a leading highway safety organization and a vocal opponent of the Boozman Amendment.

Daphne Izer and the Curls offer compelling and tragic stories that reinforce what we know scientifically to be the case. Research consistently shows that irregular, fragmented and insufficient sleep impairs the driving skills of even the best truckers.

Make no mistake: driver fatigue is the number one safety issue in the trucking industry. In the past three years alone, there have been 15,000 truck-related deaths. The Boozman Amendment threatens to exacerbate this public health crisis.

The Boozman Amendment isn't about drivers' interests and it isn't about highway safety interests. It is about corporate interests, and the corporate bottom line shouldn't drive our highway safety laws.

I implore my colleagues to stand with the highway safety community in opposition to this dangerous amendment.